



FREE!

Santa Monica Daily Press

May 8-9, 2004

A newspaper with issues

Volume 3, Issue 153

LOTTO

FANTASY 5

5, 16, 22, 24, 31

DAILY 3

Afternoon picks: 0, 5, 7

Evening picks: 0, 0, 9

DAILY DERBY

1st Place: 10, Solid Gold
2nd Place: 12, Lucky Charms
3rd Place: 08, Gorgeous George
Race Time: 1:46.74



NEWS OF THE WEIRD

by Chuck Shepard

PEOPLE WITH ISSUES

Serial thief Colin Sadd, 41, pleaded guilty in April in Sheffield, England, to his latest capers, including swiping five cars that he had gotten dealers to let him test drive. As with his previous car thefts, Sadd drove them around, cleaned them up inside, and washed and waxed them before abandoning them. Said his wife, "(He desperately needs help with his obsession.)" And Debra Janan Goins was charged with theft in February in Mount Carmel, Tenn., after writing three checks taken from a purse she stole, but each time carefully filling in the check register with all the details of the illegal transactions.

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Carolyn Sackariason/Daily Press

As part of a weekly contest, the Daily Press will give away a free prize to the first reader who can accurately describe where this photo was taken. E-mail answers to sack@smdp.com.

Midnight relocation proved a short story

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN — More than three decades after it opened and just a year after it was driven off the Third Street Promenade, the Midnight Special Bookstore will soon close for good, according to its embattled owner, Margie Ghiz.

Ghiz's left-leaning, independent bookstore — opened 34 years ago by activists in Venice — was forced off the Promenade last March by escalating rents. After an eight-month delay, Ghiz opened a new Midnight Special store on Second Street.

On Friday, Ghiz blamed that wait and City Hall bureaucracy for the store's seemingly imminent demise.

See MIDNIGHT, page 7

Let the healing begin: Beaches get \$4.1 million

Cleanest summer in 13 years predicted for area shoreline

BY JOHN WOOD

Daily Press Staff Writer

WILL ROGERS BEACH — The beaches in Santa Monica Bay will be cleaner this summer than they've been in more than a decade, a prominent local environmentalist predicted Friday.

The sunny forecast is due in part to \$4.1 million worth of grants recently awarded to area agencies to help treat urban runoff that winds up in the ocean, runoff from as far away as the San Fernando Valley.

Leading politicians, environmental activists, and members of state and local water boards gathered at Will Rogers State Beach on Friday to hand over checks to the City and County of Los Angeles, as well as the Southern California Coastal Waters Research Project (SCCWRP), a public research agency.

"The voters understand that this is our infrastructure — just as much as that highway, or our public schools, or police," said Santa Monica resident Terry Tamminen, appointed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to head the California Environmental Protection Agency. "We must take care of this infrastructure."

"We've come a long way, but this tells us we still have a long way to go," Tamminen added. "The (Santa Monica) Bay and these beaches are the most valuable thing we'll ever own."

Santa Monica Bay attracts about 50 million visitors each year and the coastal economy statewide is responsible for 700,000 jobs and \$55 billion in revenue, said Cynthia Ruiz, commissioner of the LA board of public works. Mark Gold, president of Heal the Bay, a local environmental group, said he expects local beaches to be cleaner this summer than they've been in 13 years — when water quality first was graded.

"These are the kinds of projects that we need to see," Gold said, adding that dirty water leads to respiratory infections and stomach flu. "And these are the projects the public needs to learn about."



John Wood/Daily Press

Officials gathered at Will Rogers State Beach on Friday to announce \$4.1 million in grants to help improve water quality at area beaches.

The LA County Flood Control District received a \$1.1 million grant to be used for the construction of a low-flow diversion project, which will prevent contaminated runoff from reaching Dockweiler and Will Rogers State Beaches by redirecting the dirty water to the City of LA's sanitary sewer.

SCCWRP — pronounced "skwerp" — received \$250,000 to conduct an in-depth evaluation of beach clean-up projects and

See GRANTS, page 7

School funding compromise moves forward

By Daily Press staff

DISTRICT HDQTRS. — Members of the school board voted unanimously on Thursday to support a last-minute funding compromise intended to deflate the drive for a controversial charter amendment.

If the City Council also agrees to support the deal on Tuesday, leaders from the Community for Excellent Public Schools, which drafted the charter amendment, have agreed to abandon their campaign.

The compromise — negotiated behind

See CEPS, page 7

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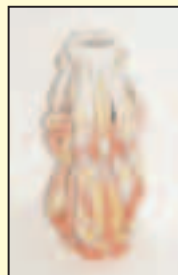
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JACQUELINE BIGAR'S STARS

The stars show the kind of day you'll have:

★★★★-Dynamic ★★★★★-Positive ★★-Average
★★-So-so ★-Difficult

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

★★★ Pressure builds, even if you just want to hide out. Others have expectations that you would prefer not to fill — so don't! A must visit to a relative or extra time at work could be all you want to do. Say just that. Tonight: Vanish home soon.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

★★★★ Discussions take you into another realm. Perhaps, if you give up your overly serious manner, you will flourish. Sometimes others don't understand why you are so serious. Reach out for others. You will lighten up soon enough. Tonight: Try something different.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

★★★★ You might feel a bit tight financially. Being with someone you enjoy and care about doesn't take the National Reserve to finance. Make a picnic and take a walk in the country. Find a favorite spot to relax. Tonight: Togetherness feels good.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

★★★★ Don't allow your seriousness to stop you from enjoying your life. Others seek you out, wanting your company. Come on — it's the weekend. Let go of worry, and greet those who care about you. You might be surprised by how renewed you are. Tonight: Accept an invitation.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

★★★★ How you handle a friend or loved one could change substantially. Let go of worry and greet friendliness with a more open attitude. You don't always need to be the center of attention; you can do something nurturing and caring for someone else. Tonight: Flow with the moment.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

★★★★ Letting go could be a bit more difficult, as a friend or key person could be challenging you left and right. Find the apple of your eye, who might be a child. Enjoy and play away. Seriousness might not have a place here. Tonight: Where the fun is.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

★★★ You could be pushed by a family member who sometimes handles you as if he or she is superior. Follow through on what you see as important. Relax at home; be with the ones you love. Don't make anything difficult. Tonight: Rent a movie.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

★★★★ Reach out for a friend at a distance, but don't take his or her unavailability personally. What is happening is that he or she needs to work through a problem. Hang with your friends; visit with your neighbors. Tonight: A casual dinner.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

★★★★ A friend or loved one might feel financially cramped. The question is, how much do you want to treat, pitch in or loan. Be honest with yourself. Don't expect repayment immediately, if ever. You're doing what you're doing for yourself. Tonight: Indulge.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

★★★★ You're up for nearly anything, but others could rain on your parade. Please don't let this happen. Remember, it is your weekend, too. Find someone who wants to enjoy him- or herself as much as you do. Tonight: Wherever you are, there is a party.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

★★★ Take your time deciding on your plans, especially if you feel sick or tired. You might need some time to recharge your batteries. You cannot always be on high or ready to play. Give yourself what you need first. Tonight: A little mystery intrigues others. Just do your thing.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

★★★★ Where your friends are is where you want to be. Follow through on what is happening. Get into something fun and loosen up. Don't worry about someone who might be dragging you down. Let go of romantic ideals. Tonight: Play the night away.

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Play time not over for seniors

By Daily Press staff

The Promenade will be the place to party next week ... if you're a senior citizen. The Bayside District Corp., which manages the downtown and the Santa Monica Commission for the Senior Community, are finalizing plans for the 12th annual Senior Day.

The Thursday, May 13, event will take place at Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade between Arizona Avenue and Santa Monica Boulevard, starting with registration at 10:30 a.m.

Senior Day recognizes community members 60 years and older and coincides with Older Americans Month, designated by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging.

The theme for the month is "Aging Well, Living Well" and was chosen to "recognize older Americans who are living longer, healthier and more productive lives," officials said.

Three hundred seniors are anticipated to register for the day's activities.

Terry & Shanna and Tunes R Us will provide music, and lunch will be served from noon to 12:30 p.m. for a \$1.75 suggested donation. Speakers will include Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom and Stephanie Negriff, director of transportation for the Big Blue Bus.

Prizes will be awarded throughout the day from area businesses, including the Flower Box, Fritto Misto, Locanda del Lago, Royalty Auto Body and Ye Olde King's Head.

The senior commission works in an advisory capacity to the City Council and city management on matters pertaining to the senior community.

For more information, disability-related accommodations or to volunteer for this event, call the senior recreation center at (310) 458-8644 or (310) 576-4754 at least three days prior to the event.

The Big Blue Bus will offer transportation. For bus information, visit www.bigbluebus.com, or call (310) 451-5444.

SM gets a new sound with 'Edge'

By Daily Press staff

The public will be given its first opportunity to experience a sound installation in a seemingly unexpected environment.

A live performance of the Frank Gehry-designed Listen Edgemar will be held May 16 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., in the subterranean parking garage.

The evening is an opening celebration for a permanent, though ever-changing, composition designed for this site, officials said.

Composers Hugh Livingston and Michael Zbyszynski created the sound installation.

The installation isn't designed as music, but a tapestry of sound, officials said. In concert with the high and low tides of the nearby Santa Monica Municipal Pier, five-minute episodes mix the sounds from the courtyard and instrumental improvisations.

The schedule of tides will be announced in the elevator and posted in the garage.

The first illumination of AHA, a light sculpture by artist Thomas Eatherton, is also planned for May 16.

The event will be free and open to the public, with refreshments in the courtyard.

The musicians who participated in recording the source materials will be on hand for an opening night performance, including Pauline Oliveros (accordion) from New York and Philip Gelb (shakuhachi) from Oakland.

Los Angeles-based musicians Jessica Catron (cello), Jeremy Drake (prepared guitar), Vinny Golia (single reeds and flute) and Paul Livingstone (sitar and Mexican guitar) round out the roster.

Edgemar is located at 2435 Main St., one block north of Ocean Park Boulevard, or five blocks south of Pico Boulevard and two blocks in from the beach.

For information and directions, visit www.edgemar.com for directions.



For Saturday, look for mostly poor conditions and fading WNW wind/ground swell, building local windswell, and fading S swell. Northern LA spots will see surf in the knee- to waist-high range at many spots, with some occasional chest-high sets at standout combo breaks. South Bay spots see mostly the NW energy with knee- to waist-high surf at average areas and some chest-high sets at best combo breaks in the north half of the bay. Look for W winds 10-20 knots in the morning building into the 20-25 knot range by the afternoon. A few of the better-positioned breaks may actually be able to handle the NW winds, but will become junky if they shift more westerly.

Write us at wood@smdp.com and tell us what the surf is doing today at your local break.

Today the water is:

67°

	LOW TIDES				HIGH TIDES			
	Morning	Height	Evening	Height	Morning	Height	Evening	Height
SATURDAY	7:20	-1.1	6:09	2.7	NA	NA	2:28	3.3
SUNDAY	8:31	-0.8	7:40	3.0	12:35	5.6	4:03	3.5
MONDAY	9:45	-0.5	9:44	2.9	1:48	5.1	5:15	3.8
TUESDAY	10:52	-0.4	11:23	2.4	3:20	4.6	6:04	4.2
WEDNESDAY	11:48	-0.2	NA	NA	4:50	4.4	6:41	4.6
THURSDAY	12:31	1.7	12:33	0.1	6:05	4.3	7:12	5.0
FRIDAY	1:23	1.1	1:10	0.4	7:07	4.2	7:40	5.3

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RESPONSES ON PAGE 4

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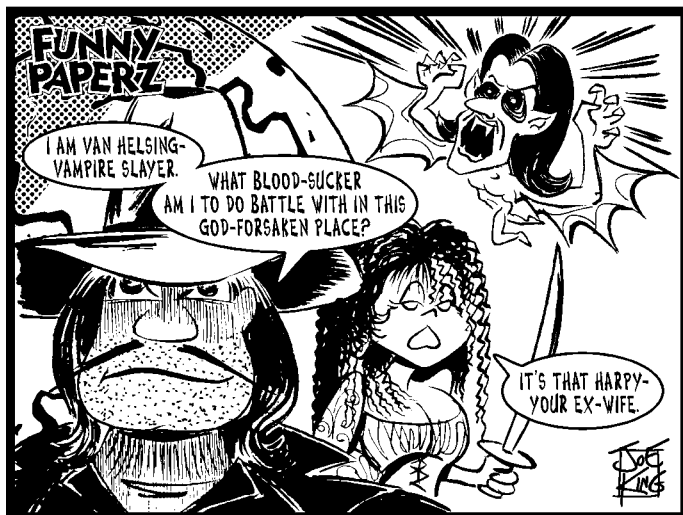
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OPINION



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The QLine

SLEEP TIGHT? THEN DON'T LET THE BED TAX BITE

This past week, Q-line asked:

"Will you support a bed tax increase? Why or why not?"

Here are your responses:

■ "There are approximately 9,000 conservatives and 9,000 liberal consistent voters in Santa Monica. It is often difficult for a ballot issue to win without a swing vote from one side to the other. The conservatives like the school parcel tax due to the apartment tenants, who for the most part get stuck with the tab. This time, the wealthy conservatives will have mixed feelings on the bed tax due to their friends — the hotel owners — feeling a negative impact on profits due to the room rates climbing with no additional profit to the hotel. This will be interesting to watch. I will vote for the bed tax because anyone who can afford to stay in a Santa Monica hotel can certainly afford the bed tax."

■ "Any money gotten from the bed tax will be completely wasted on the bums or harassing businesses in Santa Monica. There is absolutely no point to it."

■ "This is a good idea. Other cities do this and I think this city needs all the money it can possibly get."

■ "The bed tax should not be increased. It will drive business away from Santa Monica. If the City Council needs money again, they should budget better."

■ "I will not support this or any other tax increase. All taxes should be lowered and not raised, as we are all already taxed to death."

■ "The only thing I find wrong with this question is that you never stated

what the bed tax currently is or what it's proposed to go to, therefore I can't make an informed decision, can I?"

■ "No new taxes. We cannot lose the revenue of people who spend millions staying in the city. The City Council has been causing this problem for years. If we keep spending money on low-income housing, homeless shelters, homeless resources and giant library projects, what can anyone expect? Before a tax increase, why don't we cut one-third of our homeless budget and stop building housing that doesn't generate property tax revenue? I am certain we could find a portion of the money needed to fund our schools and ways to generate even more tourism."

■ "This is almost a non-issue. We need the people to stay in these hotel rooms to try and keep what used to be a wonderful city somewhat wonderful. I don't even know why tourists continue to come here — the smell of the homeless is becoming overpowering, the traffic is unbearable. What does a bed tax have to do with anything?"

■ "Another tax? These socialists have never seen a tax dollar they couldn't spend fast enough. Denny Zane, Judy Abdo, Ken Genser — they should all be replaced with actual leadership. People that will take care of the problems we have, not this bloated bureaucracy we have now. A constant stream of outflowing taxpayer money, these people should be out on the street with the bums."

A tip of the hat to NYC, where friendliness pays



MODERN
TIMES

By Lloyd Garver

New York, the "Big Apple," is often characterized as the "rotten apple" by people who don't live there. It's crowded, it's loud, it's in a hurry. While all that may be true, it's also exciting, fun and, yes, friendly.

I was recently there on business. By the time I was in my hotel room, I had tipped half a dozen people, and gotten dirty looks from three others who apparently felt I had stiffed them. My hotel was one of those hip "boutique" hotels. There is no name outside the building to identify it as a hotel and the employees don't wear uniforms, so it's hard to tell who works there and who is a guest.

After checking in, I decided to get something to eat. Just walking down the noisy, teeming street for a few blocks was energizing. When I returned after my snack, I couldn't figure out how to unlock the door to my room. Embarrassed, I went back down to the lobby and found someone to help me. He admitted that the key was "tricky," and went with me to my room and demonstrated. I tipped him, even though I wasn't sure if he was a hotel employee or a salesman from Ohio looking for an extra buck.

The next morning, I had a business meeting in a different hotel. This one had a sign outside with the hotel's name on it. As I walked into the lobby, I couldn't help noticing that three policemen were arresting and handcuffing someone. I actually heard one of the cops say something into his microphone that until then I had only heard on television: "I've got the perp." The guy I was meeting there smiled at me and said, "Welcome to New York."

After the meeting, and after tipping that hotel's uniformed doorman because he almost helped me, I got into a cab to take me back to my hotel. The driver was wearing a full chauffeur's uniform, including the cap.

He explained, "I drove a limo for years, and now that I'm driving a taxi, I see no reason why I shouldn't give the same service with the same professionalism."

He said he was a positive person, and if I ever had negative feelings, I should think of him as a computer icon on my desktop. All I had to do was double-click him in my mind, and I'd feel better. Cynics would say he was just trying to get a bigger tip, but I didn't think so.

He found my hotel, despite the absence of any identifying marks, and I paid him. (OK, I admit I gave him a dollar more than I normally would have). He thanked me, and handed me an envelope.

I successfully unlocked the door to my room, went in, and opened the envelope. It was a thank you note for taking his cab. The same cynics would probably guess it was a way for him to advertise in case I ever wanted to hire him privately. But that wasn't the case. There was no phone number on the card. But there was a little poem that he had written, along with his name and address — Paul J. Hintersteiner, New York, New York. He was just a genuine, positive person dedicated to professionalism who happened to wear a chauffeur's cap.

Like seeing the "perp," meeting Mr. Hintersteiner was, for me, another "Welcome to New York."

A few days later, it was time for me to go home. As I headed to the airport, I had a nagging feeling that I hadn't done something in my four days in New York. Then I realized what it was. There were still probably two or three people in Manhattan that I hadn't tipped.

The flight attendants on my plane were based in New York. When they pushed the food cart down the aisle, I declined the breakfast. I added, "But when you're serving drinks, I'd love some orange juice, please." The flight attendant looked at me as if I had just suggested that Los Angeles had better corned beef than New York. She answered in her New York accent, "Yeah, right. Like I'm going to remember your drink after I get done serving all this food." I guess that was New York-ese for, "Y'all come back soon."

And I will.

(Lloyd Garver has written for many television shows, ranging from "Sesame Street" to "Family Ties" to "Frasier." He also has read many books, some of them in hardcover. He writes the "Modern Times" column for CBSnews.com's Opinion page and can be reached at smdp@lloydgarvermoderntimes.com.)

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Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Santa Monica Daily Press staff. Guest editorials from residents are encouraged, as are letters to the editor. Letters will be published on a space-available basis. It is our intention to publish all letters we receive, except those that are libelous or are unsigned. Preference will be given to those that are e-mailed to sack@smdp.com. All letters must include the author's name and telephone number for purposes of verification. Letters also may be mailed to our offices located at 1427 Third Street Promenade, Suite 202, Santa Monica, 90401, or faxed to (310) 576-9913. All letters and guest editorials are subject to editing for space and content.

OPINION



Former SMC students fume over auto tune-down

Guest Commentary

By Deb Helt

"You can go up and down Santa Monica Boulevard to all the dealers and find at least two people who have either graduated or have taken classes at the automotive program at Santa Monica College," said Petra Wolf, a former classified employee at Santa Monica College.

It has been a year since the majority of the vocational programming at SMC was eliminated due to budget cuts. At the end of the 2003 school year, to the chagrin of long-time faculty and staff, the remaining automotive equipment was given away, and the space was converted into storage within days. New building plans are being formulated for where the program used to be conducted.

Professors and administrators are hoping that former SMC students will find a way to make it across town to the programs at LATT or Cerritos College. However, Wolf says that students who work on this side of town are having a nearly impossible time making it to classes after work, and she has seen many students quit in the past year.

As the dust settled on the cut programs, recent graduates counted themselves lucky to have been able to go through the program. SMC Alumni Mary Ann Pruitt, who now works at W. I. Simonson Mercedes-Benz said, "The program did a great job in preparing me for the automotive trade. It's really a shame that they took out something so valuable to training women into this workforce."

Nearby colleague and SMC alumni Geoff Kaman, who actually teaches a part-time software class at the college, echoed those sentiments, saying, "I always knew where to go to find anyone in the automotive community. I fear now that other people looking to start a career in this industry will be missing out."

Former SMC student Steven Hogarth, a member of the program's informal advisory

board, is a prime example of the kind of community the department had created over time. Hogarth, a native of Scotland, made the trek to the U.S. with the goal of working his way up the ladder in the automotive industry. He spent four and a half years at SMC, almost all of it working and studying in the automotive department.

He became a volunteer apprentice at Simonson Mercedes while still in school. Now years later, he is the service manager for the whole operation.

For many in the SMC community, the automotive program was an especially poignant loss. In its 64 years of existence, it had not only served as an important training ground for future mechanics, and an inexpensive place for community members to get repairs done, it had become a gathering point for people who loved to work on cars. Through the program, those looking for their niche or a better job could, with the help of their professors, easily find local industry people wanting new talent.

For some students, who were not bound for four-year universities, the automotive program had become their path to a better life financially and emotionally. The department served many young students considered "at-risk" for gangs. With a starting salary of \$30,000 per year common, and ample room to grow, automotive work was an incredible chance to move forward economically while doing something they liked.

When the time came for the vote last spring, all of the trustees except one, Nancy Greenstein, voted to eliminate most of the school's vocational programming. When I interviewed Greenstein for SMC's Corsair newspaper last fall, she said that cutting the automotive program, knowing that it was the fastest growing industry in the area and in need of fresh talent, was not something that she could bring herself to do.

"Auto dealers are the No. 1 business in terms of Santa Monica city revenues," she said. "I felt this was a significant indicator for people who are looking for a career in auto repair."

SMC students have not forgotten when last year they organized a tour of the vocational programs for the trustees, and only Greenstein showed up.

The automotive community is a tight-knit group. According to Wolf, who spent 15 years in the department, faculty and staff often stayed on for the long haul, in part because of their mission and partly because of strong relationships. A year after the program was cut, the group of professors still gets together weekly just to hang out. The larger group of about 30 gets together for dinner every month. Funerals, weddings and any other event of significance is attended by the whole network of professors, classified staff, and their partners and children.

Some have been able to move on more easily than others since the program's demise. Wolf said that she feels lucky to have been able to find another position relatively quickly (with the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District), but she's making a fraction of what she used to make at SMC. She noted that several professors retired early, and she knows a couple of the other former employees have not

yet found other work.

"We're not bitter," she said, laughing with a tinge of sarcasm.

As SMC grows and changes, last year may be remembered as the beginning of the end of SMC's reign as a place of opportunity for everyone. The SMC automotive department, now scattered about the city, will attest to that.

(Deb Helt is a senior in the urban studies and planning program at Cal State Northridge who used to attend SMC. She is a musician and former community organizer who now lives in Echo Park.)

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People &

Music with a colorful bent

By Daily Press staff

Close to 1,600 third- and fourth-grade students from the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District were treated to a special concert by the Santa Monica Symphony last month at the Civic Auditorium.

Allen Robert Gross, conductor and music director, conducted the Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra in "A Colorful Symphony" with narration by David Avshalomov. The orchestra also played the very lively Farandole from Bizet's L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2.

"A Colorful Symphony," by acclaimed Latino American composer Robert Xavier Rodriguez, is based on the children's book "The Phantom Tollbooth," in which a little boy enters a magical world of marvelous adventures, including an encounter with Maestro Chroma, whose symphony orchestra plays the colors into the world.

Tom Whaley, arts coordinator for the school district, arranged the bussing of the children. Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom greeted the children and introduced the concert.

Sponsoring the concert for children were: Sullivan Automotive Group, Southern California Disposal, Larry and Lisa Kohorn, TransAction Companies Limited, John and Diane Petring, and Allen and Karen Gross.

The Santa Monica Symphony has expanded its outreach to children. As part of that outreach, the children of the Grant Elementary school were invited to an interactive talk with Gross, followed by a rehearsal of the Santa Monica Symphony in its auditorium.

The public is invited to a free concert by the Santa Monica Symphony on Sunday, May 30 at 7:30 p.m. in the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. Gross will conduct Mozart's "Jupiter Symphony," Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Couperin" and Prokofiev's "Second Violin Concerto," which will feature renowned violinist Roger Wilkie.



Way Wong/Special to the Daily Press

Allen Robert Gross, conductor and music director of the Santa Monica Symphony, takes on the role of Maestro Chroma, whose music plays color into the world, as David Avshalomov narrates "A Colorful Symphony" based on the children's classic "The Phantom Tollbooth," in a concert attended by local students.



Santa Monica Star

(Left) Participating artists Lita Albuquerque and Laddie John Dill. (Center) Local artist, Lynn Gadal; John Miller, Venice Family Clinic chief development officer, and his wife, Charlene. (Right) The three co-chairs of the Venice Art Walk Anniversary Celebration Committee — Vicki Baker, Deb Love and Kathy Barrett.

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Arts Walk sneak preview

By Daily Press staff

To celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Venice Art Walk, a cocktail party and live benefit art auction was held Thursday in the spacious Venice studio of artist Laddie John Dill.

On view at the event was a 25-year retrospective of collectible Venice Art Walk posters and T-shirt designs. This year's poster was created by Dill.

The benefit art auction featured works by artists such as Billy Al Bengston, Dennis Hopper, Astrid Peston, Lita Albuquerque and Woods Davy.

The Venice Art Walk will take place the weekend of May 22-23. The Venice Family Clinic is the largest free clinic in the United States. It provides medical care to uninsured individuals and families in Los Angeles County who would otherwise have no access to healthcare.

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LOCAL



Beached wails: Voters heralded for support

GRANTS, from page 1

to develop strategies for improving bacterial water quality in enclosed bays.

The City of Los Angeles was awarded a \$1.05 million grant for replacement of defective drainage and sewer pipes and to repair structures that keep away birds at Cabrillo Beach.

Finally, the County of LA's Department of Beaches and Harbors received a \$1.75 million grant for the second phase of an improvement project underway at Marina Beach. The grant will be used to specifically address chronic bacterial contamination there.

All of the grants were awarded by California water boards. Beth Jines, director of the State Water Resources Control Board, a branch of the EPA, said a total of \$95.6 million in bond money is available to clean up beaches through voter-approved Propositions 13, 40 and 50.

Many of the speakers at Friday's event praised the voters for their commitment to the beaches. LA City Councilman Jack Weiss said that commitment benefits everyone.

"Right now, the beach behind us is virtually deserted," he said. "But in a few months, it's going to be packed."

Charter amendment may get early dismissal

CEPS, from page 1

closed doors by City Manager Susan McCarthy and John Deasy, superintendent of schools — calls upon City Hall to give the district at least \$6 million a year for the next five years. Schools throughout California are reeling from budget cuts in Sacramento.

CEPS leaders added urgency to the discussions by gathering thousands of signatures in support of their charter amendment. If passed by voters, the amendment would have guaranteed schools at least \$6 million the first year and substantially

more if city revenues grew. It also would have lasted indefinitely.

Officials on both sides of the issue expressed optimism that the matter will be resolved without forcing it to the ballot, where local voters frequently have been asked to decide school funding issues. While a lengthy campaign was sure to be costly and fragment some segments of the community, resolving it through a compromise will help keep strong the ties between City Hall and local school groups, officials added.

— John Wood

Midnight Special flipped its first page 34 years ago

MIDNIGHT, from page 1

"Last year, well over 1,000 of you gave us so much money, so much of your time and so much heart, to make sure we could reopen after eight months 'in storage,'" Ghiz wrote in a message to customers. "Unfortunately, the delay was too great and our debts grew with the delays. Only local outlets of major chains can afford the losses that come with opening stores; even though our sales were steadily growing, it was not fast enough to keep us going until we could sustain ourselves."

"Therefore, it is with so much sadness and even much anger, that we announce we are closing the Midnight Special Bookstore."

On Friday, Ghiz was reluctant to discuss the store's closing, adding the decision was still too recent and emotions running too high. In her message to customers, she expressed gratitude to the loyal customers who have made Midnight Special a hangout for intellectuals and hub for a variety of community events.

"We know how much you have given to us; we want you to know how hard we tried and how long we worked to keep our doors open. We also want you to know how sincerely we will miss your comments, complaints, support, events, books, small talk, jokes, ideas; you have been our community, our daily life, for 34 years."

The Midnight Special is expected to

close in four or five weeks. Ghiz said she hopes to unload her entire inventory through a sale beginning today.

The closing of its doors will mark the end of the independent bookstore begun 34 years ago by civil rights activists in Venice and moved to Santa Monica in the early 1980s. By the end of its first year, two of its founders had been jailed for refusing to give the FBI the names of friends and customers who were attending anti-Vietnam War meetings.

It seemed fitting, then, that in her Friday message to customers, Ghiz reminded the Midnight Special loyal to carry on in that spirit.

"These are amazing times we live in, both at home and all over the world," she wrote. "They are as exciting as they are tragic, because we in this country who have such great responsibility, have also a great opportunity to open minds and accelerate change; and, maybe, even begin to close down an unjust and oppressive system."

"Nothing will die when the Midnight Special closes its doors, because all of you and our staff of the last 34 years and today — Ruben, Rolando, Erin, Bill, Lorraine, Olin, Daniel, Jason and Jim — are the life of the Midnight Special, and each one of us is part of a much larger voice that cannot be silenced."

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STATE

Wrongly convicted man recounts prison survival

BY BRIAN SKOLOFF
Associated Press Writer

BAKERSFIELD — Even murderers and rapists detest child molesters.

Behind bars, life can be brutal for people convicted of sexually abusing children — they're the bottom rung, marked men, constantly living in fear. Many seek shelter from other inmates by agreeing to "protective custody," rarely leaving their cells.

Found guilty of 17 counts of child molestation, John Stoll knew he'd never survive with that stigma. So he lied, posing as a drug runner for 20 long years — and somehow avoided attack until his conviction was reversed last week.

"I was terrified," Stoll said. "I knew the odds weren't real good that I wasn't going to get stabbed going to prison as a convicted child molester."

Stoll walked free on Tuesday after most of his alleged victims recanted and said they lied about being molested back in 1984.

During his first days in prison, Stoll began researching crimes that could carry a 20-year sentence. He came across a newspaper article about a man convicted of smuggling marijuana and guns. He became that man — "And that's what I was for 20 years."

Stoll, now gray and balding, revealed details of his life in prison as he joined his lawyers for a celebratory meal on his first night as a free man — his 61st birthday. Gorging on filet mignon, calamari, and a chocolate birthday cake, he marveled at his freedom.

But the past still lingers, one night in particular.

A fellow inmate came to his cell — and said he knew Stoll's secret. The man had discovered his case in the prison law library.

"He says to me, 'I've got paperwork on you,'" Stoll remembered.

Then the cell doors closed for the night. Stoll thought it would be his last.

"I could feel the blood draining from me. I was scared. I sat all night and didn't sleep," he said. "Who's going to let a child molester walk around. It's a pretty disgusting crime."

By a stroke of luck, the next morning there was a riot in the "chow hall" and the inmate who threatened to expose Stoll was whisked away.

A guard later came to Stoll's cell and handed him a bundle of the other inmate's papers — the details of Stoll's conviction.

"I tore it up and flushed it down the toilet," Stoll said. "More than once, a prison staff member saved my life."

Stoll refused the protective custody given to most child molesters because it meant 23 hours a day alone in a cell. He knew he couldn't take the solitude, so he banked on his drug-running story to keep him safe.

Stoll's ability to keep his conviction a secret was "quite remarkable," said Anne Mania, an attorney at the San Rafael-based Prison Law Office, which handles civil rights issues for inmates.

"There's a huge stigma attached to being a child molester so they're often the victims of violence by other prisoners," Mania explained. "A lot of them are parents and everybody can identify that the abuse of children, particularly sexual

abuse of children, is wrong. There's never any justification for that, whereas somebody might be able to, in his or her mind, justify a murder or a rape."

Stoll still can't believe he was never attacked.

"For 20 years nobody stabbed me so I must've said the right things," Stoll said. "I don't know what kept me alive ... You're really walking a fine line in prison because you can't be yourself."

Stoll was a fit man when he went to prison in 1985, a carpenter with strong hands, a full head of dark blonde curly hair and a winning smile. Now, a row of deep wrinkles crosses his forehead, and his gray mustache frames a mouth with just seven teeth remaining.

Stoll, who loves to laugh, lost most of his teeth to gum disease and medical neglect while in prison.

"This is really embarrassing to have a mouth full of teeth like this. You can't even smile," Stoll said, practically gumming each bite of steak.

Two Innocence Project groups in California won Stoll's freedom after tracking down his alleged victims and persuading most of them — now adults — to come forward once again. Prosecutors still maintain Stoll is guilty, but they won't refile charges because of a lack of evidence and the recanted witness testimony.

Stoll was convicted as part of an alleged child molestation ring that purportedly involved sodomy, group sex and pornographic photography. But no pictures were found — in fact, prosecutors presented no physical evidence at the trial. None of the children, ages 6 to 8, were examined by doctors. The case rested on testimony alone.

Four of those accusers testified in January that investigators pressured them until they lied. A fifth testified he has no memories from that part of his childhood.

The sixth, Stoll's own son, Jed, still insists his father molested him. Stoll blames that on a bitter custody dispute, saying his wife at the time had filled Jed's head with lies.

He has no other family left. His mother, who paid for his defense, died while he was in prison.

"But she always knew I was innocent," Stoll said. "That's what matters."

Stoll left Avenal State Prison with \$200, standard for released prisoners.

"That's 10 bucks a year," he joked. "I've got nothing else left."

He will likely sue Kern County — as have six other vindicated child molestation defendants, some of whom have won millions in settlement money.

Old friends have contacted him since his release, offering work and shelter. But he hasn't made any decisions.

He spent his first night at one of his attorney's homes and went on a shopping spree at a mall Wednesday, buying a new pair of glasses and a set of clothes. He called the ordeal "sensory overload."

When the birthday cake arrived at the table with a burning candle Tuesday, Stoll's eyes widened. He grasped both sides of the plate, shaking nervously, closed his eyes and blew lightly.

"My wish has been answered," he said.

STATE BRIEFS

First cut may not be the deepest

By The Associated Press

VENTURA — Facing a \$46 million budget shortfall, Ventura County managers warned of severe service cuts, including law enforcement patrols.

Department chiefs this week unveiled their proposals for getting by on less during a daylong special session called by the Board of Supervisors. The managers said they can cut spending, but it won't be pretty.

The county's elections chief suggested doing away with absentee voting, and Coroner Ronald O'Halloran said he might have to lay off his chief deputy — and himself.

Additionally, the board was told that thousands of residents who depend on county government for such things as hot meals, health care, police protection, veterans services and pesticide monitoring might see programs reduced or eliminated.

Arnold Schwarzenegger wants to shift \$1.3 billion from county governments, with Ventura County shouldering \$17 million of that.

"It's critical that people understand that the cuts they receive are not the result of some cold county ogre sitting in a Dilbert office," said Colleen House, director of the Area Agency on Aging. "Your board has not been given any latitude in what to do."

County Executive Officer Johnny Johnson said, however, that the county's financial predicament isn't entirely the state's fault.

Spiraling labor costs, especially pension expenses, for the county's 8,000 employees also have contributed to the imbalance, Johnston said. The sprawling Health Care Agency, for instance, estimated that employee earnings would rise 22 percent over two years.

Additionally, he said, retirement costs will jump a staggering 249 percent.

Crude behavior costs recycling firm

By The Associated Press

OXNARD — The Halaco Engineering Co. agreed to pay \$150,000 to settle a lawsuit pollution suit filed by the district attorney's consumer and environmental protection division over its disposal of used oil.

Without admitting guilt, the Ormond Beach metal-recycling firm agreed to a permanent change of disposal methods at its troubled smelting operation, which recycles magnesium scrap and waste.

Ventura County prosecutors said Halaco took used oil and grease from its trucks, bulldozers and other machinery and either added the material to the smelting furnace to reduce the natural gas needed to melt the magnesium or placed the material on scrap that went into huge industrial washers that discharged water into onsite settling ponds.

"They're not burning used oil anymore. Used oil is very dirty, it often can have heavy metals in it," Senior Deputy District Attorney Mitchell Disney said. "It's still a dirty operation, by nature, and if there's anything our office can do to make it cleaner, within our authority, we will."

Halaco lawyer Arthur Fine said the company disagreed with the district attorney about whether state and federal regulations permitted the burning of used oil as a secondary source of energy.

Environmentalists and regulators have long targeted Halaco, which has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

The company was convicted last fall of polluting the air near its plant, placed on probation for three years and ordered to pay a \$7,500 fine. Less than two weeks later, Halaco settled two lawsuits filed by environmental groups when it agreed to clean up its slag heap.

Fore! Trump slices golf course conversion plan

By The Associated Press

RANCHO PALOS VERDES — Instead of 36 luxury homes, Donald Trump is considering a plan to transform his Ocean Trails Golf Club into a quasi-resort, with 113 luxury bungalows and 18 town houses.

"It's going to be magnificent — bungalows a la the Beverly Hills Hotel and some town homes, very, very luxury, very, very upscale," Trump said this week. "It will be beautiful. This is much more in keeping with the golf course."

"What we've done by doing this is it gives us the room to build a really beautiful driving range."

It also eliminates concerns over the geologic stability of several of the home lots, since a driving range would be built there instead. Trump's geologist has insisted the lots are safe for building, but the city's consultants have yet to sign off on the project.

Trump hasn't given the city any revised details on the property.

Councilman Larry Clark called the idea "a fascinating turn of events," but one that has the potential for conflict in a community historically wary of development.

"It's going to be an area of controversy, there's no question, because of density issues," he said. "It's a dramatically intriguing and yet challenging and complicated shift in Ocean Trails."

Woman, teen drown after huffing

By The Associated Press

LA PUENTE — A young woman and teenage boy drowned in a backyard swimming pool apparently after inhaling Freon to get high, a practice known as huffing.

The bodies of a 20-year-old woman and a 16-year-old boy were found Thursday at about 3 p.m., sheriff's Sgt. Richard Garcia said. Freon causes loss of the use of arms and legs.

The names of the victims weren't released.

"It appears at this point they were inhaling Freon from a canister. Apparently it's a new way to get intoxicated," Garcia said. "We assume they decided to get into the pool. Freon has the effect where limbs no longer become functional after heavy intoxication."

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by JENNIFER LOPEZ





STATE

Wildfires stir debate over underfunded agencies

BY ELLIOT SPAGAT
Associated Press Writer

SAN DIEGO — The shortcomings are clear as the first week of California's wildfire season draws to a close.

Bug-infested, tinder-dry trees have yet to be removed. Firefighting agencies are still understaffed and short on cash.

Inconsistent building codes in fire-prone areas continue to put homes at risk. Confusion persists about the rules for when to activate military aircraft. Incompatible communication networks prevent firefighters from talking to each other.

Despite widespread agreement on these persistent gaps — highlighted in a report last month by a state commission formed after last year's deadly fires — the vulnerabilities are only slowly being addressed.

"We have a lot of voices now singing the same song," said San Diego County Supervisor Dianne Jacob, whose district includes mountain communities east of San Diego that were among the hardest hit by last year's fires. "It's nothing that money can't solve."

This week's fires have blackened more than 29,000 acres and forced hundreds to flee their homes, mostly in Riverside County, east of Los Angeles. Those areas were largely unscathed by last year's blazes, which killed 24 people, destroyed 3,631 homes and charred nearly 750,000 acres.

The two most destructive wildfires burning across more than 29,000 acres in Southern California this week were nearly contained, but that's small comfort to firefighters who are bracing for a long

summer, partly a result of low rainfall.

"I think we're sitting on a powder keg," said John Hawkins, a senior California Department of Forestry commander in San Diego during last year's fires who has since joined the Riverside County Fire Department.

Officials note several improvements this season, including better training for military pilots and new computerized systems to warn residents of fires. San Diego banned new homes with wood-shingled roofs, and federal officials Wednesday relaxed rules for sending millions of dollars to remove dead trees in three at-risk counties. The money, however, has yet to be given out.

The report recommended clearer rules on using federal military aircraft. Critics argued that last year's fires would have done less damage if the aircraft had been dispatched sooner. Rep. Duncan Hunter, who lost his home in the fires, waited 22 hours for two tankers that he requested, and then-Gov. Gray Davis' office met similar delays.

The report also urged reconsideration of California's rule against using firefighting aircraft after sunset. The deadliest of last year's fires was believed to have been started by a lone hunter in San Diego County who sent a distress signal about a half-hour before nightfall.

The Forestry Department is reviewing restrictions on night flying and expects to reach a decision soon, said Jim Wright, deputy director of operations.

The report also recommended better cooperation and communication among fire agencies and makes several big-ticket requests, including staffing of all engines

with more firefighters and acquiring 150 more fire engines. Communication is a problem because the state's many fire agencies do not operate on the same radio frequency.

The dangers appear especially acute in San Diego County. The City Council shelved measures such as brush-clearance rules and replacement of existing wood-shingled roofs. The proposals, which were backed by the fire chief, were considered too expensive for homeowners.

Jacob, the San Diego County supervisor, has met resistance to her proposal for a regional firefighting authority. The

county has about 60 firefighting agencies, some of them volunteer forces that rely on pancake breakfasts to pay the bills. Wright called it a "hodgepodge" arrangement.

"Lots of people don't want to give up their kingdom to go into coordinated entity," he said.

Dan Fierro, who saw flames Tuesday night from his hilltop home in Riverside County, said he has been thinking about clearing dry brush from around his house.

"But I really haven't done anything to prepare," he said. "But it's definitely in my mind as something we need to do."

Forest Service unveils plan to keep wilderness protected for playtime

By The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A proposal for managing Southern California's four national forests recommends giving 100,000 additional acres wilderness protection while taking into account the growing demand for public recreation.

The plan, released Thursday by the U.S. Forest Service, would give the agency greater control over off-road recreation already going on in the backcountry by increasing the amount of land for legal motorized use by 2 percent, to nearly 1.6 million acres.

The plan would apply to the 3.7 million acres of the Angeles, Cleveland, San Bernardino and Los Padres national forests, which extend from Big Sur almost to the Mexican border. The forests provide Southern Californians a respite from the bustle of the nation's second-largest metropolitan area.

The forests have recently been under siege by a growing number of recreational users, increased urbanization and loss of habitat. Total visitation approaches 8 million people annually and is expected to grow by 20 percent during the next 15 years.

Tom White, an assistant project leader who helped draw up the proposal, said the blueprint attempts to control the increased

use by acknowledging it.

"We're increasing the level of control," he said. "It's moving to a higher level of regulated use, recognizing that use is going to be there."

Don Amador, California representative of the Blue Ribbon Coalition, an off-road group, said the Forest Service was going in the right direction. But the Sierra Club criticized the Forest Service for a "very, very disappointing plan."

"It has missed a great opportunity to permanently protect large areas of the forest for future generations, and it increases activities like off-road vehicle use that the Forest Service recognizes are harmful and can't manage currently," said regional representative Bill Corcoran.

Corcoran particularly criticized the amount of acreage recommended for federally designated wilderness protection, noting that the forests are home to 470 biologically fragile species.

About one-third of the forests, or roughly 1.1 million acres, is protected as federally designated wilderness. There are about another million acres without roads that have been deemed eligible for wilderness protection. The management proposal recommends that about one-tenth of that land be protected.

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NATIONAL

You're hired! Employers add 300,000 jobs in April

BY LEIGH STROPE

AP Labor Writer

WASHINGTON — A springtime surge in hiring rumbled into a second month as employers added nearly 300,000 new jobs in April, which lowered the unemployment rate to 5.6 percent.

In a second dose of good economic news Friday, congressional budget forecasters predicted this year's federal deficit will be smaller than they had expected.

The timing couldn't have been better for President Bush, who has been dealing with international fallout from the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by U.S. soldiers. The economy, which had been assumed would be a major drag on Bush's re-election bid, now may prove otherwise.

The Labor Department reported that payrolls have risen for eight months in a row, with almost 900,000 new jobs created so far this year. Nearly three in four of those jobs were added in the last two months. The unemployment rate dipped in April from 5.7 percent to 5.6 percent.

"I'm officially declaring the jobless recovery dead," said Ken Mayland, president of ClearView Economics. "I think we are now on a path of what will be substantial job gains."

On Wall Street, the report sent stocks tumbling, with the potential for higher corporate earnings doing little to soothe investors' worry over the speeding economy's effect on interest rates. Analysts expect the Federal Reserve to start raising rates this summer.

Bush, promoting his economic policies on a Friday tour of Iowa and Wisconsin, both of which he lost in 2000, said, "Our economy is strong, and it is getting stronger." That's because "we have left more money in the hands that earned it," he said, again crediting the tax cuts he has championed for good economic news. They also have contributed to record deficits.

Congress' nonpartisan office for budget analysis said this year's federal deficit could be less than the \$477 billion it predicted in March. It was the latest indication of possible improvement in the government's short-term fiscal picture.

Even so, the shortfall already is at \$284 billion for the first seven months of the fiscal year, the Congressional Budget Office said. That means the final 2004 deficit is likely to surpass or at least come close to last year's \$374 billion, a record in dollar terms.

Bush is on track to be the first president since the Great Depression to have lost jobs during his watch. Hiring gains in recent months have helped shrink those losses, however, to about 1.5 million. His administration was widely criticized for an overly optimistic forecast that 2.6 million new jobs would be created this year. Economists now say the chugging economy could

approach that mark.

"I don't think these two months of big increases are a flash in pan," Mayland said.

Public support for Bush's handling of the economy stood at 43 percent early this month, according to an Associated Press-Ipsos poll. That was the lowest approval rating since Ipsos-Public Affairs began tracking the question in 2002.

Democratic challenger John Kerry said Bush shouldn't get a pass for Friday's positive economic news.

"Any step forward in the job market is good news for America's workers, but let's be clear: we still have a long way to go to get America working again," Kerry said.

Hiring was widespread in April, with the service sector leading the way. Professional and business services employment rose substantially, by 123,000. In that category, gains were in employment services, including temporary employment firms, services to buildings and dwellings, management and technical consulting services and architectural and engineering services.

"The dam has broken," said Joel L. Naroff, president and chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors Inc. "After refusing to hire people for what seemed like forever, businesses have reversed direction and are now pumping up their payrolls."

Hiring at temporary employment firms has surged by

261,000 in the past year, an indication that companies are growing. Because of intense overseas competition, however, employers have been skittish about taking on the cost of full-time, permanent workers.

Demand for permanent workers is picking up, said Tom Gimbel, president of the LaSalle Network, a Chicago-based staffing and recruiting firm.

Employers still hold the cards, and people looking for jobs need to reduce expectations about salaries and benefits, Gimbel said.

The nation's struggling factories are turning around slowly. After 42 straight months of job losses, the manufacturing sector started hiring in February, based on Labor Department revisions. For the year, manufacturing payrolls are up by 27,000 overall.

"In the near term, I see full speed ahead," said Jerry Jasinowski, president of the National Association of Manufacturers. "Manufacturing is growing rapidly, and job creation — always a lagging indicator — is at last beginning to kick in."

Economists are bracing for higher interest rates and expect the Fed to move in August. Some think the strong jobs report, signaling a surging economy and potential inflationary pressures, could accelerate to June the first rate increases in more than four years.

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NATIONAL

Security plans weighed for nuclear weapon sites

BY H. JOSEF HEBERT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The Energy Department for the first time is looking at creating a federal police force to guard nuclear weapons facilities and plans to remove weapons-usable nuclear materials from some sites to protect against terrorists.

Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said Friday that consolidation of nuclear material to fewer sites is "one of the surest ways" to increase protection of weapons-grade uranium and plutonium from terrorists.

In a speech prepared for security personnel at the Savannah River nuclear site in South Carolina, Abraham said the possibility of replacing private guards with a federal security force at Energy Department weapons sites is being seriously discussed. He also said he is considering creating an elite security unit to guard high-priority facilities.

"Because the stakes are so high everything is on the table," Abraham said.

Currently private guards protect federal nuclear research laboratory and other facilities that are part of the vast nuclear weapons complex, including facilities holding plutonium and highly enriched

uranium used in nuclear warheads.

New Mexico has two nuclear weapons labs — Sandia and Los Alamos.

Officials at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque could not immediately say what Abraham's recommendations might mean.

Los Alamos National Laboratory spokesman Kevin Roark said officials there believe "the more we can standardize training, materials, tactics, the better the security of the whole complex gets."

He noted Abraham laid out several options. "We're looking forward to the discussion and the planning that will go into any of these transitions, whichever one might come about, with the goal of better protecting information and materials here at the lab," Roark said.

A contractor, Protection Technology Los Alamos, currently provides the lab's security force of about 600.

In the West, sensitive nuclear material also is at facilities in Idaho and Nevada.

The Energy Department has been under growing criticism from some members of Congress and public interest watchdog groups for failing to adequately improve security to meet the increased threats made apparent by the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in

New York and on the Pentagon.

Next week, a House committee has scheduled another hearing into reports of security shortcomings in the department's effort to protect nuclear material. Recently congressional auditors said security upgrades ordered at the Energy Department sites after the Sept. 11 attacks may not be fully in place for another five years. The department hopes to finish them by the end of 2006.

A private watchdog group also has produced a number of "whistleblowers" who claim private guards at weapons facilities have poor training and morale.

Abraham announced what he called "sweeping new initiatives" to improve security in the nuclear weapons complex. The Energy Department develops nuclear weapons and maintains the nation's stockpile.

"Simply put (these materials) must not be allowed to fall into the wrong hands," said Abraham.

Abraham acknowledged "security lapses" at some facilities such as lost keys for secure areas. While calling such incidents rare, he said "they are unacceptable" and that failure to address such problems would not be tolerated.

Last month, lawmakers at a congressional hearing urged the department to consolidate weapon-grade material.

Rep. Christopher Shays, R-Conn., said it "should be immediately obvious" that too many facilities are holding nuclear material.

Abraham said the department will consolidate the materials in fewer places and won't rule out moving plutonium and other weapons-usable material from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California. Lab officials oppose such a move on grounds they need the material for research.

He said that a program already is under way to transport plutonium from Los Alamos to the Nevada Test Site, and he announced that within three years weapons-usable uranium now at Sandia will be moved to a permanent storage site.

Roark said some of the material could move from Los Alamos to Nevada as early as late summer.

Abraham said the department also is building a central facility at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Tennessee to consolidate highly enriched uranium within that sprawling site.

Senate committee votes to change handling of nuclear waste

BY H. JOSEF HEBERT

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A Senate committee has approved changes in the law that will allow the Energy Department to avoid removing thousands of gallons of highly radioactive sludge from tanks at a federal nuclear site in South Carolina.

Energy Department officials expressed hope the breakthrough might also help them reach agreement with Washington and Idaho officials on the treatment of millions of gallons of liquid radioactive waste kept at DOE facilities in those states.

The Senate Armed Services Committee agreed to put the change in a defense bill, despite objections from Washington's two

senators, who are not on the panel. The provision was sought by Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who said the change — limited to waste at the Savannah River site near Aiken, S.C. — was needed to implement an agreement reached between the Energy Department and the state.

The provision was approved late Thursday during a closed committee meeting where the defense legislation was being crafted. The decision was made public Friday.

The Energy Department has been stymied in an attempt to reclassify some of the 90 million gallons of radioactive waste kept in tanks at federal facilities in Washington state, Idaho and South Carolina so it would not have to ship it to

a special high-level waste repository.

The department claims the residual sludge, the byproduct of Cold War bomb-making, is too expensive to extract. Instead, the government says, it can be diluted by covering it with grout so it can be left in place as less radioactive "low level" waste.

After a federal judge in Idaho last year ruled that reclassifying such sludge as low-level waste violated the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, the department began pushing members of Congress to change the law.

Graham's provision limits the change in the law to waste at the Savannah River site where 34 million gallons of highly radioactive liquid waste is being kept in tanks.

He said the agreement with DOE

would allow the sludge lining the bottom and sides of the tank to remain in place and be covered by grout, saving \$16 billion in cleanup costs and shortening the cleanup time by 23 years.

The provision, Graham said, still "allows South Carolina and DOE to define high level waste in a very reasonable manner. ... There's nothing going to be left behind ... that will not be secured through environmental remediation to protect South Carolina."

But state officials in Idaho and Washington oppose any changes in the law unless they are assured the states will have a final say in how the waste will be handled.

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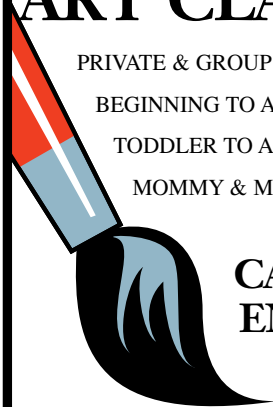
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NATIONAL



Qwest to sell pay phone business to a former employee's company

BY SANDY SHORE
AP Business Writer

DENVER — Qwest Communications International Inc. said Friday it is selling its pay phone division because it is no longer a good fit in the fast-growing wireless industry.

FSH Communications LLC, formed by a former Qwest employee, will buy the retail pay phone and inmate communications systems. Denver-based Qwest has about 85,000 pay phones across its 14-state region.

Terms of the sale, expected to close in August, were not disclosed. The deal could affect 250 jobs, a source close to the negotiations said on condition of anonymity.

"Pay phones really aren't fitting into our long-term plans," Qwest spokesman Michael Dunne said. "When you talk about the growth in wireless industry, pay phones just really don't fit into where we're going."

Qwest is following in the footsteps of other telecom-

munications companies by shedding the pay phone business, which has dropped off industrywide as more consumers turn to cell phones.

Ken Dunn, a Qwest vice president, said the decision came as part of an examination of overall services to maximize profitability.

Former Qwest employee Donald Goens formed FSH specifically to take over Qwest's pay phone division, believing there is a market for the service.

"There are still people who don't have access to wireless at an affordable rate and people who are still in environments, such as prisons, that have a need for the services," he said.

Qwest will remain the primary supplier of access lines, operator services and long-distance capacity. Goens said he has no plans at this time to change phone call rates. Qwest's name and logo will remain on the phones and FSH will handle customer and end-user inquiries.

Grays matter: Wolf population holding strong

BY JOHN FLESHER
Associated Press Writer

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. — The surging gray wolf population in Michigan's Upper Peninsula has exceeded 200 for the fifth consecutive year, a milestone that likely will bump the animal from the threatened species list.

Once virtually extinct in Michigan, the wolf is continuing a remarkable comeback that began in 1989 when three of the animals established a territory in the western Upper Peninsula, the Department of Natural Resources said Thursday.

The estimated population rose during the last year from 321 to more than 360, the agency said. Department biologists produce a yearly census using techniques such as tracking, aerial observations and monitoring wolves fitted with radio collars.

Keeping the population above 200 for five years in a row means the population has reached the state recovery goal, said Pet Lederle, supervisor of the department's research and technology section.

The wolf's status already has been downgraded from endangered, meaning on the brink of extinction, to threatened.

The U.S. Forest Service is expected next month to propose removing the wolf from the list, a process that would require hearings. Once it is completed, the natural resources department would do likewise on the state level, Lederle said.

Once that happens, the wolf population would be overseen by department managers.

Killing or otherwise harming wolves would remain illegal, although the department might destroy those that repeatedly attack cattle or cause other serious problems.

The agency last year killed four members of a pack in the eastern Upper Peninsula that continually went after livestock, Lederle said.

"As the population increases, the likelihood that we'd have to take that type of measure also increases," he said. "But I still think it would be pretty rare."

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INTERNATIONAL

American's fingerprints found on bag containing detonators, Spain says

BY DANIEL WOOLLS

Associated Press Writer

MADRID, Spain — The fingerprints of an American lawyer arrested in the Madrid terror bombing probe were found on a plastic shopping bag containing detonators like those used in the train attacks, the Spanish government said Friday.

The bag was found inside a stolen white van left near a train station that three of the four bombed trains departed from, an Interior Ministry official said.

Brandon Mayfield, a 37-year-old former Army officer who converted to Islam, was taken into custody Thursday by FBI agents, who also searched his home in the Portland, Ore., suburb of Aloha.

It was the first known arrest of a U.S. citizen in connection with the March 11 commuter train attack in Madrid that killed 191 people and injured 2,000 others.

The Spanish official declined to give more details and the National Court, where a judge is leading an investigation into the attacks, said it had no information on Mayfield.

The seven detonators found inside the bag were of the same kind used in the train bombings, the government says. Authorities also found an Arabic-language cassette tape with verses of the Quran inside the van, which was discovered in Alcala de Henares, about 20 miles northeast of Madrid, hours after the attacks.

The announcement of the van's discovery was the government's first public admission of a possible Islamic link in Spain's worst terrorist attack, which it initially blamed on Basque separatists.

Other fingerprints found inside the van included those of Moroccan Jamal Zougam, a prime suspect in the attacks who is under arrest and charged with mass murder and terrorism.

Police say cell phones used to activate the detonators in the backpack bombs used in the train attacks were traced to the cell phone store Zougam ran in Madrid.

Witnesses in Alcala de Henares reported seeing men wearing ski masks and carrying backpacks get out of the van on the morning of the attacks, headed for the train station.

The bombings have been blamed on an alleged Moroccan-based Islamic extremist cell with possible links to al-Qaida. Eighteen people have been charged so far, six with mass murder and the others with collaboration or with belonging to a terrorist organization.

Mayfield was arrested Thursday on a material witness warrant and has not been charged with any crime, according to a senior law enforcement official in Washington, D.C., speaking on condition of anonymity. A material witness warrant allows the government to hold people suspected of having direct knowledge about a crime or to allow time for further investigation.

As a former Army officer, Mayfield's fingerprints would be on file with the government. A law enforcement official said the fingerprints were not on file because of any crime or as part of the government's terrorism databases.

Beth Anne Steele, a spokeswoman for the FBI in Portland, said two search warrants had been served Thursday in Washington County, which includes Aloha. She would not release further details.

Mayfield passed the Oregon bar in 2000 and kept a low profile in the Portland legal community until 2002, when he volunteered to represent Muslim terrorism suspect Jeffrey Battle in a child custody case.

Battle was among six Portland-area residents who were sentenced last year on charges of conspiring to wage war against the United States by helping al-Qaida and the former Taliban rulers of Afghanistan.

Mayfield was not involved with Battle's defense in that case. Law enforcement officials in Washington did not know of any contacts between Mayfield and the other Portland terrorism defendants.

Mayfield converted to Islam in the late 1980s and regularly attended Friday prayers at a Beaverton mosque, said mosque administrator Shahriar Ahmed.

Friends and family said they were shocked by the arrest.

Outside their home near Portland late Thursday, Mona Mayfield described her husband as "a good man, a good father, a good husband." The couple have two sons, ages 10 and 15, and a 12-year-old daughter.

Portland attorney Tom Nelson, who described himself as a mentor, said he received a call Thursday from Mayfield asking for help.

"His wife was in tears because of the way the search was conducted. The FBI apparently hurt things in the house, left things in disarray," Nelson told reporters outside Mayfield's home. "He is a regular, run-of-the-mill guy."

Nelson said Mayfield had never traveled to Spain.

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Check Out the Question of the Week on Page 3 next week and let us know what your thinking!

The Q Line



WORLD BRIEFLY

U.S. forces under fire

By The Associated Press

NAJAF, Iraq — Hours after American forces seized the Najaf governor's office, militiamen of a radical cleric dug in, taking positions behind earthen mounds in the holy city and firing mortar shells and small arms at a U.S. base.

The defiance late Thursday came amid concerns that U.S. troops were about to move directly against the anti-American cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr. American soldiers responded with a heavy barrage of 120mm mortar fire, U.S. jets streaked across the night sky, and plumes of smoke rose over the east bank of the Euphrates.

Meanwhile, in Baghdad, a suicide car bomber killed five Iraqi civilians and an American soldier Thursday at the edge of the Green Zone that houses the U.S. headquarters. The blast wounded 25 people, including two U.S. soldiers.

Also, an audio recording attributed to Osama bin Laden offered rewards in gold for the killing of top U.S. and U.N. officials in Iraq or of the citizens of any nation fighting here.

The 20-minute recording, dated Thursday, appeared on two Web sites known for militant Islamic messages. The voice sounded like that of bin Laden and the words were heavy with Quranic verse, but the authenticity of the recording could not immediately be verified.

Mosque bombing kills five

By The Associated Press

KARACHI, Pakistan — A powerful bomb exploded at a Shiite Muslim mosque packed with worshippers in this southern port city on Friday, killing five people and wounding at least 50, police and witnesses said.

The attack occurred shortly after 1 p.m. as prayers began at a mosque inside a government-run religious school.

The school houses students ages 4-18 and two mosques, one each for Sunni and Shiite Muslim worshippers. Witnesses said most of the victims were adults who came to pray.

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and home to several radical Islamic groups, has been hit by frequent acts of terrorism and sectarian violence.

A police officer on the scene, Sanaullah Abassi, said five people were killed and 50 injured.

Aftab Sheikh, a senior politician responsible for law and order in Sindh province, where Karachi is located, blamed anti-state elements for the blast.

Ex-mayor had affair with teen

By The Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. — A former Oregon governor and transportation secretary under President Carter has admitted to a sexual relationship with a 14-year-old girl in the 1970s, when he was mayor of Portland.

Neil Goldschmidt, 63, who served as governor from 1987-1991 and earlier as Carter's transportation secretary, told The Oregonian about the relationship for a story in Friday editions.

Earlier in the day, citing only heart arrhythmia and blocked arteries that put him at risk of a heart attack, Goldschmidt relinquished his posts from the Oregon Board of Higher Education and a firm that has been trying to acquire Portland General Electric.

Goldschmidt told the newspaper he came forward after learning that a weekly paper was on the verge of reporting the relationship. Before The Oregonian account surfaced, the Willamette Week, which publishes Wednesdays, reported on its Web site that it told the governor a day earlier it was preparing a story about his affair.

According to Oregon laws in 1975, sex with a girl under 16 constituted third-degree rape, but the statute of limitations expired in 1979.

Goldschmidt, who served only one term as governor, said he has lived with "enormous guilt and shame" in the 30 years since the nine-month affair, which started in 1975 when he was 35. He was married at the time. Goldschmidt said he agreed to a financial settlement with the woman in 1994. He did not identify her.

The end for 'Friends'

By The Associated Press

NEW YORK — All together now: a national sigh. Ross and Rachel, together again as "Friends" fades to black.

Television's most popular comedy provided the ending most of its fans were hoping for on Thursday, with the on-again, off-again couple declaring their undying love and the gang heading out for one last cup of java.

"It was really emotional," said Matthew Perry, who watched the finale with the other five cast members. "I pride myself on being a real man, but I shed a few tears."

The hour-long episode marked the end of 10 years for the sitcom, which followed six New York buddies as they moved from post-adolescence to something approaching adulthood.

Monica and Chandler were surprised by twins and prepared for their move to the suburbs. Phoebe was already married, and Joey is headed west to get serious about his acting career (and star in an NBC spinoff starting in the fall).

In New York, the final episode was beamed on a big screen in Times Square, and some 3,000 people sat on blankets and watched in a park overlooking the Hudson River in Tribeca.

Public down on Bush

By The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Public opinion of President Bush's handling of hot-button issues such as the economy and the war on terrorism is near the low point of his presidency, but Democratic rival John Kerry has been unable to capitalize on the Republican's slide, an Associated Press poll found.

The AP-Ipsos poll found the race between Bush and Kerry remains close, with Bush's support at 46 percent, Kerry at 43 percent and independent candidate Ralph Nader at 7 percent.

Despite recent encouraging economic news on both jobs and growth of the economy, support for Bush's handling of the economy was at 43 percent, the lowest number since Ipsos began tracking that question at the start of 2002.

Support for Bush's handling of foreign policy and terrorism, usually his strongest area, was at 50 percent, down from 55 percent a month ago.

Southerners and Republican women, two key Bush constituencies, have lost enthusiasm about his handling of foreign policy and terrorism, according to the poll conducted for the AP by Ipsos-Public Affairs.

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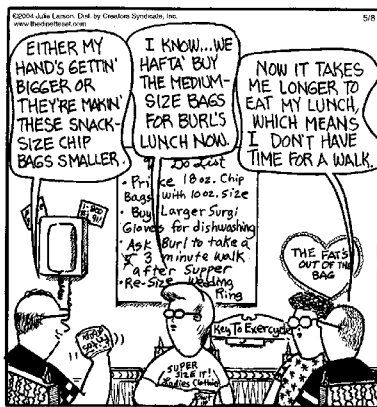
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- 5 Bad writer
- 9 He follows Jay
- 10 Use posters
- 12 Dazzling
- 13 Ball, e.g.
- 14 Trace
- 16 White House moniker
- 17 Ogle
- 18 "Open Range" star
- 20 Hush-hush
- 22 Beatty film
- 23 Pueblo material
- 25 Spacious
- 28 Lord Peter Wimsey's creator
- 32 Bedroom sight
- 34 Permit
- 35 Get into
- 36 Bach creation
- 38 Silly
- 40 Horse opera
- 41 Peaceful protest

DOWN

- 42 Take by force
- 43 Garb for Dracula
- 44 Ultimate
- 1 Olive's love
- 2 Soon
- 3 Go
- 11 Wolfish looks
- 15 Set sail
- 19 Deuce beater
- 21 Flat fishes
- 24 Mouse catcher
- 25 — Ababa
- 26 Wry
- 27 Soprano Scotto
- 29 Gladdens
- 30 Makeup exam
- 31 Maze word
- 33 Play part
- 37 Movie plantation
- 39 Wee bite

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Nobody does it better: 'Bond' star saves the day

By The Associated Press

■ LONDON — It didn't require much 007 derring-do, but former James Bond actor Roger Moore came to Queen Elizabeth II's rescue Friday, helping out when technical trouble prevented the monarch from unveiling a plaque.

The queen pressed a button that was supposed to open a set of red curtains in front of a Heathrow airport plaque honoring a charity fund-raising program, but nothing happened.

Moore got up from his seat and crouched down to tug at the drapes, which opened on the second try.

"I wasn't meant to be up there but James Bond has got to do something," Moore said later.

The 76-year-old actor and the queen attended a ceremony commemorating the 10th anniversary of a UNICEF-British Airways program that raises money by asking airline passengers to donate coins and bills of any currency.

Moore, who's an ambassador for UNICEF, the United Nations children's agency, was knighted by the queen last year and said it was great to see her again. "I'm a royalist so I'm always thrilled," he said.

UNICEF uses money from the Change for Good program to help children around the world through efforts such as polio vaccinations in Zambia and aid to street children in Mexico. Officials said it

has raised more than \$30.6 million.

"It brings hope to children who literally have none," Moore said.

■ LONDON — The former manager of the band Tears for Fears was sentenced to three and a half years in jail Friday for defrauding investors in a purported cure for drunkenness made from volcanic rock.

Paul King, 52, was convicted of fraud at London's Southwark Crown Court. Prosecutors said he took \$823,000 from business partners in Soba International Ltd., a firm set up to market the remedy in Britain.

King told partners he would use his music-industry contacts to help raise money to market the product. Instead, he set up a shadow company with the same name and siphoned off money to start other businesses and maintain a luxury lifestyle.

Judge Michael King, who's no relation, told King he had behaved with "breathtaking dishonesty."

In addition to the jail sentence, he was banned from being a company director for 10 years.

According to backers of the remedy, crushed volcanic rock, ingested as a powder, filters alcohol from the bloodstream. Marketing the product in Britain was the idea of two British rugby players

who saw it for sale in South Africa in 1999.

King managed Tears for Fears in the 1980s, when the British duo topped the charts with hits including "Mad World" and "Everybody Wants to Rule the World."

■ EDINBURGH, Scotland — Kiefer Sutherland, in a tartan kilt and knee-socks, attended the wedding of his former stepdaughter in the Scottish capital.

Sutherland, whose latest role in the TV series "24" has made him a familiar face in Britain, chatted to fans before the ceremony Thursday in Edinburgh's City Chambers.

Michelle Kath, the 27-year-old daughter of Sutherland's first wife, Camelia, married actor Adam Sinclair, also 27.

Sutherland and the bridegroom walked to the ceremony from the hotel where Sinclair was staying, accompanied by about 10 other male friends and relatives wearing kilts in a variety of tartans.

The 37-year-old actor, wearing a green-and-blue Douglas tartan, told reporters his grandparents had come from Glasgow. His father is actor Donald Sutherland.

The bride hugged Sutherland as she emerged from a silver chauffeur-driven car before they went into the chambers.

■ WATERVILLE, Maine — Ed Harris will return to Maine this summer to collect the Maine International Film Festival's Mid-Life Achievement Award.

The actor spent most of last fall in Maine starring as Miles Roby in HBO's adaptation of Richard Russo's "Empire Falls."

"We always thought Ed Harris was a fabulous actor," said Ken Eisen, an owner of the Railroad Square Cinemas and one of the festival's programming directors. "When he came here, he wowed everybody here, not just with his acting, but with his humanity."

While filming "Empire Falls" in Skowhegan in mid-November, Harris surprised moviegoers by appearing at the Strand Cinema to introduce and discuss "Pollock," the story of artist Jackson Pollock, which he starred in and directed.

The 53-year-old also signed movie posters that were auctioned to benefit the Family Violence Project in Somerset and Kennebec counties.

Eisen said festival organizers are still discussing the date of Harris' arrival. The festival is scheduled for July 9-18.

Harris has been nominated for Academy Awards for his work in "Apollo 13," "The Truman Show," "Pollock" and "The Hours."

Past recipients of the award include actors Peter Fonda and Sissy Spacek, as well as directors Jonathan Demme and Terrence Malick.

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